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UNCLAS ALMATY 001855

SIPDIS

DEPT PASS TO OPIC - BALLINGER  
DEPT PASS TO DTA FOR STEIN, EXIM FOR GLAZER  
DEPT PASS TO AID - EE - PHILLIPS/RUSHING  
DEPT PASS TO EPA - WFREEMAN  
TREASURY FOR 4231/ITA/MAC/MLONDON, 4201/BISNIS/TGUNN  
USDOC FOR 6110/ITA/TD/BI/RHALPERN  
ANKARA FOR CFC  
TASHKENT FOR EPUTNAM

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ECON](#) [SENV](#) [ENRG](#) [EPET](#) [KZ](#) [ECONOMIC](#)

SUBJECT: KAZAKHSTANAN: ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATE

1. Summary: This information is drawn primarily from the Kazakhstani local press, and has not been verified. The opinions expressed in this report, therefore, should not be interpreted by readers as conveying positions and/or policy of the U.S. Government.

-- Kazakhstan Supports Tight Control over Movement of Ionizing Radiation Sources  
-- Kazakhstan Must Decontaminate the Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test Site  
-- Space Program to Develop Space Activities  
-- President of Kazakhstan Signed Law "On Social Protection Of Invalids"  
-- "Dikaya Priroda" (Wild Nature) NGO Initiated Implementation of the "Kings of Tulips" project  
-- "Access Energo" Enterprise Reduces Hazardous Emissions  
-- Republican Research Conference "Environment and Children" Held In Almaty

Kazakhstan Supports Tight Control over Movement of Ionizing Radiation Sources  
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2. Speaking at the 36th plenary session of the International Science and Technology Center's (ISTC) governing board on April 11, 2005 in Almaty, Energy Minister V. Shkolnik called on the international community to introduce a system of tight control over the movement of ionizing radiation sources with the same degree of strictness as the movement of nuclear materials. He stressed the significance of introducing such a system because terrorists might be interested in creating "dirty bombs." The minister pointed out that "any steel, iron, cobalt, manganese turns into the strongest source of gamma radiation after having been treated by a neutron laser, which is very dangerous to life. The number of such sources worldwide is huge. There are hundreds of thousands of them only in our region," he said. (Interfax-Kazakhstan, April 11, 2005).

Kazakhstan Must Decontaminate the Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test Site  
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3. At the 36th plenary meeting of ISTC on April 11, 2005, the Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources, Vladimir Shkolnik, thanked the International Science and Technology Center for reorientation of the weapons industry towards peaceful goals and noted that Kazakhstan is now facing the problem of further decontamination of the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site where there is a lot of sprayed nuclear material. It must be collected, buried and removed, he said (Interfax-Kazakhstan, April 11, 2005).

State Program to Develop Space Activities  
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4. Baikonur will celebrate its 50th anniversary in June 2005. The Kazakhstani budget includes \$340 million to implement the 2005-2007 state program to develop space activities. According to Minister of Education and Science Byrganym Aitomova, the program is "of and innovative nature" and includes the creation and operation of spacecraft for communication and broadcasting, improvement of surface infrastructure and facilities for orbiting spacecraft, creation and utilization of information and space technologies and use of piloted flights for fundamental and applied scientific research. (Interfax-Kazakhstan, April 11, 2005).

President of Kazakhstan Signed a Law "On Social Protection Of Invalids"  
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5. According to the press service of the Head of state, on

April 13, 2005, President Nursultan Nazarbayev signed laws "On Social Protection of Invalids" and "On Introducing Amendments to Some Legislative Acts of the RK on Social Protection of Invalids." The law specifies measures on medical, social and professional rehabilitation of invalids and main directions of state policy. The document envisages transfer from mostly medical to a medical-social model of social protection: provision of secured volume of free medical aid, including free medications and sanatorium-resort therapy not only to invalids but to their children as well. There are 395,000 invalids in Kazakhstan, 47,000 of whom are children (Interfax-Kazakhstan, April 13, 2005).

Wild Nature NGO Initiated Implementation of the "Kings of Tulips" project

16. In the Southern Kazakhstan Oblast, the NGO "Dikaya Priroda" (Wild Nature) has begun implementing a project known as "Kings of Tulips." Activists are calling on local people to protect wild tulips in April, during their vegetation period. There are six types of wild tulips in Southern Kazakhstan Oblast, two of which -- Greig and Kaufman tulips -- are in the Red Data Book. To prevent people from picking wild tulips, activists call on them to grow cultivars species on their garden plots. The project is supported by the International Union of Nature Conservation. (Interfax-Kazakhstan, April 13, 2005).

"Access Energo" Reduces Hazardous Emissions

17. Access Energo, owned by Access Industries, employs environmental protection technologies and has developed a special program on environmental protection. In comparison with 1998, the quantity of hazardous emissions into atmosphere was lessened by 37%, slag residuals - by 14%. KZT 557,574 million has been spent on nature protection in the six years of the company's work. Access Energo is planning to construct a new ash dump at a cost of KZT 3 bn. Observers note that Access Industries is a good example of successful business development in Kazakhstan. The company is the only regional station in the country that exports energy. Access Energo produces 1.66 bn KW of electricity and 1.8 mn Hcal of heat annually using modern technologies. The company provides with electricity over 650,000 residents and 3,600 industrial and agricultural businesses of the town and oblast. (Kazakhstanskaya Pravda, April 12, 2005).

Republican Research Conference "Environment and Children" Held In Almaty

18. The 10th republican research conference - "Environment and Children" - began on April 12 in Almaty. Kazakhstani pupils presented over 120 research projects on environmental conservation. Representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science, the leading Kazakhstani universities and research institutes participate in this conference. (Kazakhstan-I, April 12, 2005)

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